

Dear Commissioner:

First: When considering the facts of Montague's telecommunications needs, please take into account that this is a section of the town that has NO cell service, NO cable service and NO reliable broadband service. If you **fund the make-ready project to put fiber optic cable** to the Montague Center Fire Station (like all other safety centers and stations in the Commonwealth).....the town could then provide the underserved section of town with links to reliable and modern telecommunications. The Town of Montague recently voted to form a Municipal Lighting Plant.....this structure would enable the town to maximize our telecommunications efforts.

Second: How could you support a vendor's proposal that does NOT connect to the MassBroadband 123 network? Why did MBI spend \$90 million in building the network and then not REQUIRE all potential vendors to link to it?

Third: Put your trust in the local control of the broadband network expansion. It would not become a patchwork of misaligned systems.....rather a cohesive network that meets the unique local needs and overcomes the obstacles and challenges that rural communities face in their implementation of a broadband network.

Fourth: The process of selecting Comcast was flawed from the start. The Comcast Corporation was given an extension to file their RFQ!!! The reason they needed an extension was due to the vacation schedule of their staff. If they are such a large and successful company would they not have enough staff to file a proposal on time? Would Matrix been extended a similar courtesy (in actuality, an extension of time gives that company an unfair advantage over competitors)? Actions like this create a sense of cronyism and unfair practices in the selection process.

Fifth: At the public hearing on May 24th the Comcast representative did not in any fashion make a presentation of their proposal. He did offer reasons why Comcast was a good business, but offered NO SPECIFICS as to why the Comcast proposal was superior to Matrix.....He did not even offer a simple "We are better then them" statement.....it does lead one to believe that he did not know the general proposal much less any of the details.....

Finally: I urge you to consider either selecting the Matrix proposal for Montague (and Hardwick) or REOPEN the process.

-- Bob Mahler